

Building Partnerships A Practical Manual

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Introduction

The manual was developed as a part of a US - Central Europe NGO Partnership Project of the US-based Quebec Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment and the Environmental Partnership Consortium operating in Central and East Europe. Funding provided by the US Agency for International Development and the Sendzimir Foundation enabled both organizations to draw on their respective practical experience with initiating, organizing and maintaining partnership action to achieve environmental improvement.

The Partnership Project focused on using US expertise to consolidate experience with partnership action in the four Central European countries of Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. The Project goal and motivation was to make Central European experience more widely available to those involved in training and leadership development, building institutional capacity, and creating opportunities for exchange and learning among Central European and US-based organizations in the context of enlargement of the European Union.

The Local Partnership for Sustainable Development is one type of partnership, which has been promoted in Poland by the Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation. The Local Partnership is a cross-sector partnership initiative focused on motivating businesses, public sector agencies and civil society groups to work together to implement sustainable development in a specific region. The approach is based on a conviction that improving the economy, environment and society can be achieved through practical action at the grassroots or local level based on using local resources, experience and skills more effectively.

The Environmental Partnership developed and helped implement the Local Partnership for Sustainable Development together with key civic not-for-profit organizations operating at the local level interested in increasing their contribution and impact on regional development.

This manual is an introduction to the Local Partnership for Sustainable Development model as it has been developed in Poland in the period 1990-1994. It represents an attempt to codify the practical experience gained in relation to current thinking on the theory and methods of partnership action. The manual is intended for those:

- interested in using partnership action in community development;
- working to mobilize all sectors of the community around practical action aimed at improving social, economic and environmental conditions;
- seeking to build a constituency of support for a community vision as a basis

for organizing practical action for environmental improvement;

- striving to play an effective role in international networks with other community-based environmental initiatives and projects;
- fundraising for community-based environmental projects/initiatives;
- wanting to take advantage of partnership-oriented funding programs of the European Union, such as the LEADER+ program focused on rural development and EQUAL focused on bringing the socially-excluded and disadvantaged back into the mainstream.

The Local Partnership for Sustainable Development initiative is still very much a work in progress. We anticipate that this manual will be updated and amended on a regular basis as more experience accumulates. To enable direct contact with those on the front lines of establishing and maintaining Local Partnerships in Poland, we have provided a contact list for each of the Local Partnerships making up an emerging national network.

What is a Local Partnership for Sustainable Development?

1. Definition

A Local Partnership for Sustainable Development is a coalition of individuals and organizations drawn from the public, private and civil society sectors committed to taking joint action to achieve social, economic and environmental improvement of a specific geographical area.

A Local Partnership is a community of interest built around a shared desire to make a difference through practical action.



The most important resource available to a Local Partnership is the enthusiasm, skills and experience of the people involved. To get the most out of a Local Partnership, it is important to ensure:

- Membership is voluntary and open to all;
- Constant effort is made to ensure public, business and civil society sectors are involved;
- Visions, action plans and other policies are developed jointly;
- Tangible effects are achieved through practical action projects and initiatives involving as many partners as possible;
- Achievements and contributions are documented to the extent possible;
- Ongoing information and communication is maintained with a wider public;
- Organizational improvement is a constant concern for all;
- Impacts are monitored and assessed in relation to progress towards sustainability.

To be effective Local Partnerships must be grounded in a specific geographic area or region, which is defined by those involved. The geographic focus can be defined in terms of:

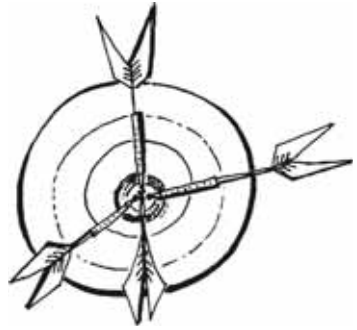
- existing administrative boundaries (e.g. county, poviat, obec),
- economic, social or environmental conditions (e.g. road network, mountain range),
- natural, cultural or historical values (e.g. Galicja, Spisz).

The important thing is that the decision as to the extent of the geographic area of interest to the Local Partnership is defined by those involved with reference to the political, social and historical context. For example, in the Central Oder River Valley, the geographic focus of the Local Partnership has been defined in terms of an historical region. The Bochnia Partnership has defined its geographical area of interest in terms of the administrative boundary of a single Poviats (county) whereas the Necklace of the North Local Partnership includes several Poviats.

<p>The Forum for Nowa Huta is focused on a part of Kraków defined in terms of history associated with the construction of a new town around one of Europe's largest steel mills in the 1950s. Nowa Huta is not an administrative or political district, but an area with which over 100,000 residents strongly identify. Due to downsizing in the steel industry, Nowa Huta is now in decline and plagued increasingly by unemployment and social problems. In bringing together civil society groups, businesses, schools and public agencies from the area, the Forum has responded by developing a Local Agenda 21 strategy through community-based consultations and practical action projects focused on environmental, economic and social improvement. The Forum has succeeded in engaging the City of Krakow by jointly establishing and operating a Local Office in Nowa Huta dedicated to public outreach and engagement. To access international experience with regeneration of industrial areas, the Forum has campaigned for Kraków to join the European Industrial Regions Association, which provides a forum for experience sharing between European steel and former steel areas.</p>	<p>The Necklace of the North straddles three voivodships located in Central Pomerania on Poland's northern coast. The geographic focus is defined by the administrative boundaries of several Poviats facing common challenges of economic revitalization of declining rural economies. Tourism development and support for local enterprise requires joint action aimed at promoting the area as a whole to potential inward investors and visitors. The Necklace of the North Greenway has been conceived and is now being implemented as a joint effort of local governments, businesses and civil society groups committed to making sustainable development a daily reality. To build local capabilities for joint action and for mobilizing resources, local leaders have registered Necklace of the North as a public benefit not-for-profit foundation.</p>
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2. Goals of a Local Partnership

The goal of a Local Partnership is to **integrate social, economic and environmental action in a geographic region so as to ensure that they contribute effectively and consistently to the sustainable development of that region.**



2.1. Integration

Integration means bringing together ongoing development activities from the social (e.g. improving safety), economic (e.g. supporting small businesses) and environmental (e.g. reducing noise) domains, which are typically organized in isolation of one another.

Achieving integration is a process that must involve those directly engaged in designing, developing and implementing specific activities, as well as those affected by them. In practical terms, this means finding ways of bringing together individuals and organizations from public, private and civil society sectors with the aim of sharing expertise, resources, experience and risks to achieve more effective and lasting results than could be achieved by acting in isolation.

Thinking in terms of resource, expertise and risk sharing between sectors is not yet well established. There are many misconceptions, prejudices and disagreements as to what the roles and responsibilities should be of government, business and non-governmental organizations. Too often, different perspectives are glossed over or assumed to be of little consequence if agreement can be reached on goals and objectives. Yet in an effective Local Partnership differences are accentuated and celebrated. Roles and responsibilities must be constantly defined and redefined as circumstances change.

An inventory of strengths and weaknesses of each of the three sectors can often help break down misconceptions and mutual suspicion, but must be undertaken with the active participation of representatives from each of the sectors. Such working meetings help not only to overcome misunderstandings, but reveal new opportunities for cooperation.

The Bochnia Local Partnership developed an inventory of strengths and weaknesses of the public, private and civil society sectors at a workshop held in 2002. The results from the workshop are presented below and represent a consensus view developed by government, business and NGO members of the Local Partnership. The list is neither complete nor definitive, but rather a point of reference.

Table 1 - Strengths and Weaknesses of Public, Private and Civil Society Sectors as Defined by members of the Bochnia Local Partnership¹

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Public Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stable finances; - legal mandate; - tradition of continuity; - broad impact (decision-making power); - executive power (power to coerce). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - depends on too many people and opinions; "votes oriented"; - money is pre-divided; - weak motivation; - lack of transparency in decision-making; - bureaucracy (restrictions, procedures); - lack of flexibility.
Civil Society Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - independence; - voluntary; - enthusiasm; - self-motivated; - ideas/values-oriented; - flexible; - scientific expertise and professional skills; - people skills; - long-term thinking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unstable (financially & organizationally); - easily manipulated; - high operational costs; - lack of management skills; - lack of publicity and mass-media attention; - not enough self-evaluation; - lack of trust by the public.
Business Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - independent decision-making; - quick but calculating (risk-conscious); - business plan; management skills; - competitiveness; - realistic; - money; - well-organized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - missing out on non-business issues; - lack of ideals/ high values /ethics; - lack of commitment to region; - too individualistic; - short-term thinking.

An obvious but important insight is that each of the three sectors has both strengths and weaknesses. Each individual and organization has the potential of adding value to its own isolated efforts by drawing on the expertise and resources of others and, in turn, the potential for contributing to making the activities of others more effective. Achieving such synergies requires that each individual and organization begins:

¹The listing is the result of a group exercise during one of the sessions of the October 2002 Building Partnerships Workshop in Bochnia, which was co-organized by the Quebec-Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment and the Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation

1. to understand its own capabilities for partnering with others;
2. to recognize the capabilities of others for partnership action;
3. to develop a capability for continuous improvement of its partnering capabilities.

Theoretically, each individual and organization has something to gain from working in partnership with others. But in practice, generating common benefits through resource and experience sharing is difficult to achieve. In part, this is because thinking in terms of matching up the capabilities of your own organization with those of another is not easy when organizations are reluctant to reveal their own specific strengths and weaknesses to outsiders. In this situation, an useful starting point is to map out potential areas for matching capabilities in a workshop setting. Such an approach was adopted by the Bochnia Local Partnership.

Table 2: A road map for generating cross-sector cooperation²

NGO ■

reliability	business thinking
legitimacy	money/in-kind support
money/in-kind support	management skills
authority (positive)	new technologies

Business ■

orders	inspiration
making procedures easier	legitimacy
business incentives	positive contacts with the community
support for initiatives	ideas for production of unique products

Public sector ■

money	expertise
commitment	management skills
enthusiasm and positive motivation	broader base of support
new sources of money (e.g. Phare Access), joint ventures	new technology & management procedures

Note: Each sector is marked with a specific color, and elements of the sector's activities that can add value to another sector through cooperation have that same color. The position in the block does not reflect the degree of importance.

²This diagram is based on a group exercise during one of the sessions of the October 2002 Building Partnerships Workshop in Bochnia, which was co-organized by the Quebec-Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment and the PEPF

Members of the Bochnia Local Partnership used the road map to identify possible practical action projects and initiatives that could be undertaken jointly by several organizations working together. In retrospect, the crucial thing was to focus discussions on defining practical actions or products in terms of potential value-added rather than on parameters of partnering or cost sharing. This approach allowed each of the participants to think not in terms of giving something up (e.g. authority, expertise, money), but in terms of gaining something in addition (e.g. more authority, more expertise, more money) and contributing tangibly to sustainable development of their community or region.

Based on their analysis of many different types of cross-sector partnership, Tennyson and Wilde (2000) have summarized the distinguishing characteristics of the three sectors as follows:

Public Sector - rights-driven, provides information, stability and legitimacy

Civil Society - values-driven, responsive, inclusive and imaginative

Business Sector - profits-driven, inventive, single-minded and fast

Based on her many years of organizing cross-sector partnerships with The Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum, Ros Tennyson emphasizes the importance of accentuating and celebrating the differences between the sectors rather than dwelling on the similarities between them.

2.2. Sustainable development

Sustainable Development was defined back in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development as "development that meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs and aspirations."

In Poland, sustainable development has been enshrined in the constitution and also in environmental law as:

"Community and economic development, in which the integration of political, economic and community activities is taking place, while at the same time maintaining the balance of nature and the stability of basic natural processes, with the aim of guaranteeing the ability to meet the basic needs of specific societies or citizens of the present as well as future generations" (Art. 3 of Polish Environmental Protection Act).

The definition does not specify the degree or quality of integration that is needed to create a sustainable society nor does it define what constitutes a sustainable society. What is important is that the interrelationship between the

economic, social and environmental dimensions of development are recognized as being fundamental to making progress on implementing sustainable development as a means of achieving a sustainable society.

According to O'Riordan (2001a; 2001b), Porritt (2000), Light et al (2004) and other proponents of sustainability, sustainability and sustainable development are often used synonymously, but they refer to quite different things. Sustainable development is a process which describes the journey that must be taken to arrive at the destination, which is sustainability - securing the life-support capability of ecological systems upon which economy and society depend. Sustainable development is driven by an interplay of political, social, and economic forces motivated by a human desire to achieve economic and social improvement that is:

- Continuous and permanent,
- Durable and reliable,
- Proactive and just,
- Enterprising and sharing.



The transition to sustainability must be rooted in an economy and society capable of generating livelihoods in line with three fundamental principles:

- Maintaining and protecting essential life support processes,
- Using renewable resource to the point of precautionary replacement,
- Pricing the cost of living according to its natural burdens and social disruption.

A fundamental premise of sustainable development and sustainability is that responsibility does not rest with any single organization or sector - whether it be a matter of social justice, environmental protection or business development. All must share in the responsibility of building a sustainable society. Encouraging specific practical action that contributes to sustainable development, which by definition must be undertaken by single organizations working in partnership or cooperation with others, requires an enabling context or environment that is conducive to joint action. Thus, an important role for Local Partnerships lies in creating an enabling and nurturing environment for partnership action specifically concerned with making sustainable development a day-to-day reality.

By focusing on cross-sector cooperation motivated by a desire to generate tangible benefits for a specific community or geographic region, a Local Partnership generates new opportunities for its members to add value to their own individual skills, expertise, know-how, experience, resources, networks and share in building a common or shared vision of what constitutes a sustainable society.

3. Establishing a Local Partnership



Establishing a Local Partnership is an uphill struggle focused on getting individuals and their organizations to find rewarding ways of working with one another. It is a struggle because few individuals and organizations have an in-house capability to work with others. There is no right or wrong way of establishing a Local Partnership. But adopting a systematic approach can save money, time and effort. Experience with establishing Local Partnerships at the community level, suggests a process or sequence of ten stages:

1. Identifying partners and local initiatives;
2. Identifying common challenges and opportunities;
3. Assessing capabilities and opportunities for cross-sector cooperation;
4. Drawing up a Partnership Agreement;
5. Adopting organizational procedures;
6. Agreeing on an Action Plan;
7. Agreeing on decision-making;
8. Assigning roles and responsibilities;
9. Establishing task teams;
10. Assessing results.

3.1. Initiating partnership action

The building blocks and key resource of a Local Partnership are the individuals and their organizations willing to make a commitment to joint action.



There are always individuals in the business, government and civil society sectors, who recognize the limitations of their own organizations and seeking to engage with others to improve the performance or impact of their organization. An important first step is to put such people together. In many places, there is an informal process of networking local leaders organized by a local government, chamber of commerce or civic group. Typically, there is also some process of planning and strategy development organized by local or regional government authorities, which seeks to consult and inform businesses, civic groups and the public more generally.

The need for and feasibility of formalizing informal networks as a Local Partnership is not always obvious or necessary. The first question to be asked in initiating any Local Partnership initiative must focus on the need and relevance

of such an initiative. Answers to this challenge can be generated at an exploratory meeting or workshop organized by key partners.

Q: How did you organize the first meetings of your Local Partnership?

A: For the first meeting I invited 50 people from different organizations, ranging from local organizations to regional ones, and from NGOs all the way to companies. Mostly they were organizations, with whom I had previously worked with on environmental education events. From my own work, I knew that there was little in the way of effective cooperation between local governments, so I invited the heads of all the municipal governments in the Wadowice Poviát to discuss how cooperation at the regional level could be improved. The first meeting was a one-off meeting and I made clear that to those I invited that there would be no further meetings unless we could find effective ways of generating benefits. I invited the Environmental Partnership to talk about practical opportunities for using partnership approaches for tourism development through the Amber Trail Greenway.

The atmosphere of the meeting was positive, but no-one wanted to be left with the initiative of organizing joint activities. People were reserved and suspicious. Although there was agreement that more could be achieved through partnership action, no-one offered to take on the task of organizing a Local Partnership. We managed to agree on the time and place for a next meeting to discuss roles and responsibilities. We decided also that we would identify a list of key challenges facing the region and draft and sign a cooperation agreement.

Our second meeting took place a month later. I prepared a draft version of the agreement, because I wanted us to have some text we could work with. Apart from the people and organizations who came to the first meeting, I invited local schools' representatives and some local business leaders.

In all, 25 organizations took part in the second meeting. As many as 22 organizations signed the Draft Agreement as a way of declaring their interest to work towards a Local Partnership.

- Renata Bukowska, Secretariat of the Wadowice Local Partnership.

3.1.1. Partners for practical action

Assessing the need and feasibility of a Local Partnership requires a preliminary identification of the most active and influential organizations from public, private and civic society sectors and their activities in the community or geographic area of interest.

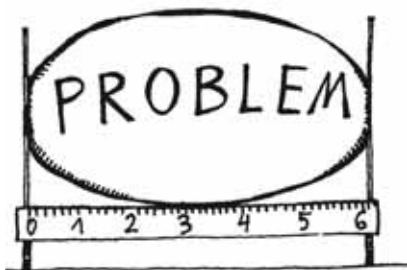


Local stakeholders are the people or organizations that help shape the community. When we talk of stakeholders, we usually mean either organizations/institutions or informal groups of people who share a common interest, trade or other activity. A first step is to identify the organizations and informal groups operating in the community and to get them to meetings where they can learn about one another. Such meetings help build up a picture of the breadth or narrowness of their respective interests and indicate areas of overlap. Some will have experience in working with others, whereas others will have done little beyond their own organizations. Meetings that bring together diverse groups with varied interests help identify local leaders and build a base of support in the community for the Local Partnership.

An important step is to identify representatives of key organizations in the community to a first meeting. In preparing for the meeting, it is essential to consider some key issues, such as:

- the time and place of meeting (what is the best time to meet? what place is perceived to be the most neutral and non-threatening?),
- chairing and organizing the meeting (who should chair the meeting? who will be acceptable? what kind of agenda or program is the most appropriate?)
- including outside experts in the program (presence of an outside organization or person when and how to include expertise with the partnership approach in the program? (see chapter 6),
- practical examples of how partnership action can bring benefits to those involved (what are the benefits for business, NGOs, government and for the broader community?)

3.1.2. Common challenges and opportunities



The first meeting of stakeholders should concentrate on reviewing problems and opportunities facing the region. The idea is to identify problems and possible solutions, which involve local leaders working together. The basis or point of departure can be a program, project or initiative already underway, or one still being developed.

The basic motivation is to expose individuals and groups to thinking about their own work or activities in a broader regional development context. Getting people to 'think regionally' about their activities does not happen easily. It does not happen straight away. This is why it is important to allow individuals and

groups to present their own activities, but to challenge them to address the broader regional or development context. Typically, such presentations make people realize that they that they have more in common than they initially thought. This realization that something can be done together provides a basis for nurturing partnership initiatives.

At the first meeting, which led to the Green Bieszczady Local Partnership, Przemysław Ołdakowski of the Bieszczady Tourist Information Center brought together all those with an interest or 'stake' in the Green Bicycle East Carpathian Greenway. Participants included local governments, hotels and guest-houses, environmental groups, the national park, as well as interested individuals. The purpose of the meeting was to draw attention to the Green Bicycle plans to create a tri-national greenway trail in the boarder regions of Poland, Ukraine and Slovakia. The motivation was to build a local constituency that would contribute to and benefit from the Greenway by getting community organizations, businesses and local government to work together on developing the Green Bicycle as a major tourist and recreation attraction of the region.

The agenda at this first meeting, included a presentation by the Polish Environmental Partnership on the benefits of partnership action, discussion of the Greenways concept as it has been developed in the US, West Europe and Central Europe. The meeting organizer, Przemysław Ołdakowski provoked a discussion on the advantages using the partnership approach to build a Greenways coalition in the Bieszczady. By focusing on the Green Bicycle as a local and very tangible initiative with potential for development as an international initiative, many of those attending the meeting were able to get their creative juices flowing and raise topics of concern related to employment, tourism development and nature conservation in a broader regional context.

A meeting based on information dissemination followed by discussion is not always the most appropriate way of getting people to think in terms of the prospects and potential of working in partnership. An alternative worth considering is referred to as Community Visioning. The approach is based on



a workshop-type meeting that requires planning before hand and also professional facilitation. The basic idea is to get those participating in the meeting to share their own knowledge, experience and ideas with others in an

interactive and non-threatening way. The motivation or purpose is to describe a desired future for the community or region and then to identify what actions need to be taken and by whom to make that desired future or vision a reality. Here is a sample program used at a "community vision to action" workshop:

- Mosaic and Vision - Big Group Discussion (What is our community like now? What do we want our community to be like in the future?);
- Participatory Planning Components - Small Group Discussions (Each small group discusses a particular component of the community);
- Selection of Key Issues (10 topics recognized by all as being of crucial importance to the community as a whole);
- Identification of projects or solutions (each small group selects an issue and works out what solutions/projects could address the issue);
- Project selection/prioritization (What is the most important/feasible project at this point of time?);
- Discussion on individual project (What are the goals and objectives of the project? What else is needed to move the project forward? Who should take part in this project? What is the first step in the realization of the project?);
- Designation of time/place next meeting and persons responsible for specific action steps.

(adapted from: Clark, 2001)

3.1.3. Joint action

Both the Green Bieszczady Local Partnership example and the "community vision to action" workshop involve prioritizing initiatives already under way in a community or region and choosing as a focus those that can generate practical contributions from as many different partners as possible. By focusing on what can be done together to contribute to a common cause also leaves aside discussion about to what extent the Local Partnership is representative of the wider community which typically leads to inaction.



Identifying a common project or initiative as an opportunity for bringing together local initiatives into a regional network or program gives those involved a chance to benefit from wider cooperation, promotion and resourcing opportunities. An important concept here is the synergy effect, which results from two or more initiatives being brought together in such a way that their overall impact on regional development is greater than the sum of their individual contributions.



ZIELONY ROWER

The Green Bicycle East Carpathian Greenway has its origins in an educational bicycle trail project developed in and around the small town of Lesko. The project was grassroots-based and involved several local partners from public, private and civil society sectors. When this local initiative was presented at the first meeting of the Green Bieszczady Partnership, it was quickly adopted as a good model for building cooperation at the regional and international levels. In this way, a local bicycle project transformed into the more ambitious Green Bicycle East Carpathian Greenway. From the outset, the goal or vision was clearly articulated, namely to create a tri-national bike trail based on development of local or heritage attractions and products through civic engagement in cultural and natural heritage protection. Those at the meeting declared what they could each contribute to making the overall initiative a reality. Each individual and organization saw their own individual initiatives and those of others in a greater regional context. It was clear that by working together for a common vision, more could be achieved than by working individually.

A regional network of local projects or initiatives, such as one based on the Greenways concept, relies on sharing a common infrastructure such as bike paths, common signage design and a common accommodation base. But there must always be room and opportunity for individual local attractions linked to local natural and cultural heritage. A successful example of this type of regional network is the Moravian Wine Trail Greenway system in the Czech Republic.

The Moravian Wine Trail Greenway system in South Moravia is a regional network linking 220 wine villages with 1090 km of bike trails. The creation of the trail network has been accompanied by joint tourism infrastructure development. Joint infrastructure means 10 tourist maps, resting places on the trails in 20 villages, a CD for entrepreneurs advising on "How to do business on the wine trails", an internet page www.stezky.cz, cross-border contacts with Austrian wine trails and much more. The trails have been made possible thanks to multi-sector cooperation headed by Nadace Partnerství (Czech Environmental Partnership Foundation) and 210 municipality authorities, along with numerous wine-growers, other businesses, and local non-governmental organizations. The important thing is that no single organization or group 'owns' the Moravian Wine Trail Greenway. All have a stake in the success of the Greenway and all must contribute to that joint success.



Another example of a regional network is the Polish Ecomuseum Network, which comprises three community-based initiatives in South Poland to protect local heritage by engaging local people in bringing local customs and traditions back to life. Each of the Ecomuseum initiatives is being developed by a Local Partnership - Babia Góra Brings Us Together, the Bochnia Partnership, and the Wadowice Partnership. Each of the three Ecomuseum initiatives resonates with the identity of its own respective region, but brings out the specific attraction and character of the South Poland region as a whole.

The "Babia Góra Brings Us Together" Local Partnership has been working on a common project: the Ecomuseum of the Babia Góra Region. The effort has been coordinated by the Association of the Babia Góra Initiatives and has succeeded in engaging numerous partners ranging from agrotourism farmers, an old manor with a lute ensemble, a potter, a sculptor, traditional toy makers, to local governments and the Babia Góra National Park. A list of local attractions has been compiled by those participating in the Babia Góra Ecomuseum members. All individual sites have been surveyed as to their potential for contributing to the ecomuseum as a regional whole. A common signage and interpretation system is being developed and a series of information brochures are planned as a common basis for marketing the Ecomuseum to outside visitors. The Babia Góra Ecomuseum is linked to the two other Ecomuseums through the international Amber Trail Greenway.



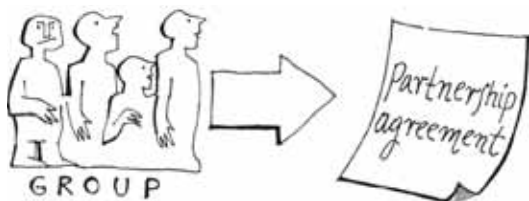
Developing a regional or international network comprising local initiatives takes many years, involvement by many different individuals and organizations. Periodic meetings can help generate enthusiasm and public support, but they must also serve as opportunities to formulate written proposals and work plans which explicitly emphasize the regional dimension.

Summary: What you are able to achieve during the first few meetings will have an important impact on how the process of establishing a Local Partnership unfolds. As an instigator of the first few meetings, you should have an idea of:

1. Stakeholders. Who are the stakeholders? (you should know also who is missing and who must be encouraged to get involved);
2. Priorities. What is important to those interested in joint action and how they can contribute to the overall process with their know-how, experience and resources?
3. Leaders. Who are the potential leaders of the Local Partnership? (who is recognized as trustworthy, dependable and having something to say?);

4. Workplan. Who is interested in developing specific activities? (you should give everyone a chance to take on follow-up work in a small group setting);
5. Context. What is the scope or spectrum of activities and initiatives focused on development, which are ongoing in the region? (how do these activities relate to - regional, national or international policies, plans and programs?);
6. Action planning. Which are the priority actions from which the Local Partnership should start?

3.2. Agreeing cooperation



3.2.1. A Partnership Agreement

On the basis of the first few meetings, it is useful to draft a document that summarizes the current situation, the desired future vision or goal, the resources and opportunities available to the Partnership and also specifies who needs to do what to move the community or region towards achieving the desired goal. This summary can also serve as a basis for a Local Partnership Agreement and a point-of-departure for joint action. Since the Agreement must be endorsed by those declaring an interest in partnership action, it is helpful to involve as many of those involved in the working meetings in actually preparing the document. The final document needs to be explicitly the focus of a meeting of all potential members of the Local Partnership, which needs to endorse or approve the document as the basis or point-of-departure for further joint activities. With several partners signing on to the Local Partnership Agreement, we can say that a Local Partnership has come into being.

The Local Partnership Agreement is important for several reasons. Above all, the Agreement is a benchmark or point of reference for those directly involved in its development, as well as for those who had not been involved but would like to contribute to development of the community or region. The Agreement is both a statement of shared values or aspirations about the community or region as a whole and a recognition of the process by which joint action is to take place to achieve community benefit.

The goal of the Bochnia Local Partnership is 1) to integrate isolated activities and initiatives aimed at the development of Bochnia region 2) to attract inward investors to the region 3) to improve the livelihoods of local residents 4) to develop and implement a sustainable development program.

The goal of the Babia Góra Brings Us Together Local Partnership is to link together isolated NGO, local government and business initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable development, cultural & natural heritage protection, and cross-border cooperation in the Babia Góra Region.

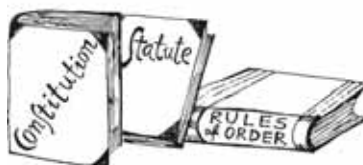
(source: Bochnia Local Partnership Agreement; Babia Góra Brings Us Together Local Partnership Agreement)

The Agreement emphasizes that involvement and contributions of partners is voluntary and that the Partnership is open to all organizations concerned with the long-term sustainable future of the region. The Agreement serves to remind that no single organization or individual is "in charge" and that the Partnership is a coalition brought together by a common concern and interest in enabling practical action that will bring community benefit.

While the rules and regulations can be an annex to the Partnership Group Agreement, they can also form a separate document, the Partnership Group Bylaws.

3.2.2. Principles and procedures

Every coalition, however informal, has some set of principles and procedures which form the basis for decision-making. At an early stage, it is useful to formulate and make explicit a set of principles and procedures for decision-making. These



can be a part of the Local Partnership Agreement or be included as an annex. The principles and procedures shape the way the Local Partnership will function, develop and make decisions. While a Local Partnership is a voluntary coalition, members of the Partnership must take responsibility for ensuring that common projects and activities are consistent with the goals, objectives and spirit of the Local Partnership. The success of the Local Partnership depends not only on the extent to which member organizations identify with goals and aspirations, but also on the extent to which member organizations are ready to share resources, responsibilities and costs. For some organizations, working through the Local Partnership means giving up some autonomy and independence. Not everyone is ready to do this right away. An important issue

that of representation of the Local Partnership. Member organizations need to decide how and who is to represent the Local Partnership to outside bodies.

Up close

What are the characteristics of a partnership approach?

A partnership approach can be practiced on many levels: projects, interpersonal relations, fundraising, promoting the Local Partnership etc.

A partnership approach becomes visible when for example:

- Local Partnership members talk about their own projects and activities with reference to opportunities for others and contributions to a broader common goal;
- Organizations are willing to compromise or modify their own activities as they become more aware of the work and contributions of others. In other words, they come to recognize that common vision is more than the sum of individual activities;
- Local Partnership members start to share information and learning with one another, especially with regard to funding or resourcing opportunities;
- Organizations use the Local Partnership framework to evaluate their own projects and activities and join with others to develop new initiatives.

Partnership requires attention when for example:

- An individual organization comes to believe that it is acting in the best interests of the Local Partnership and takes action without informing others;
- A member organization presents its own views or position as that of the Local Partnership, ignoring the voices or opinions of other member organizations. A member organization fails to share information or learning about opportunities for funding or promotion, that should be made available to all Partnership members;
- A member organization resists formalizing the Local Partnership, while at the same time failing to take on responsibility for making the Partnership operate more effectively.

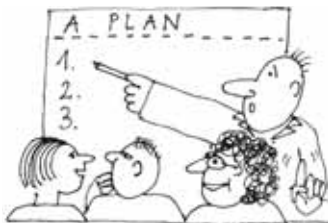
The Partnership Approach is a learning process. The actual experience of sharing costs, risks and workload is essential to appreciating the potential of partnership action. Such experiences can be achieved in the Partnership development process. Experiencing partnership action as a learning process leads to identifying areas of common interest and potential joint activities or **PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS**. Goodwill, trust and cooperation are essential ingredients of partnership action.

(see also: What are the characteristics of a partnership project - see 4.2.2)

3.2.3. An action plan

Agreeing an **Action Plan** among all members of the Local Partnership is essential to success. An Action Plan should include the following:

- a. Activities. A list of initiatives and projects proposed as activities of the Local Partnership as a whole. The aim is to determine which ongoing activities of individual member organizations can be broadened or enhanced through partnership action so that they contribute to development of the region as a whole;
- b. Tasks. A list of tasks essential to turning an individual project or activity into Local Partnership activity with timelines;
- c. Coordinators. A list of persons responsible for overseeing specific tasks are completed on time;
- d. Resourcing. Identifying sources of funding and in-kind contributions of Local Partnership members to enable completion of key tasks.



The Action Plan will be a living document in the sense that it must be constantly updated and modified in response to needs, circumstances and opportunities. In many instances, objectives will not be met due to lack of resources or other barriers. For this reason, it is important that the Local Partnership as a whole is constantly kept up-to-date as to progress in implementing the Action Plan. Periodic reviews of progress with all the Local Partnership members help also to clarify what is essential and what is less important for moving towards achieving common vision.

Managing Action Plan formulation and implementation requires that the Local Partnership establish a Secretariat. This can be one of the member organizations or it can be a new organizational entity established specifically for managing the documentation and communication related to the Action Plan and its implementation.

Implementation of an Action Plan raises also the need for an agreed decision-making process as to which activities and projects should be pursued as Local Partnership actions and which should not. There is also the issue of costs of preparing activities and projects. All these issues will not be resolved straight away. It is also important to bear in mind that there is no single best way of dealing with such matters. Every Local Partnership must work out its own organizational and decision-making arrangements. What is important is to make a start and to be ready to learn from the experience. This is why it is important to keep things simple at the start. The Action Plan should be little more than a 'to do' list for those participating in the Local Partnership. (see also 4.2.2., 4.2.3 & 4.2.4).

Q: Why agree upon a common Action Plan?

A: "An Action Plan agreed upon by all Local Partnership members will help us specify the priorities and needs of individual organizations. It helps us gain an appreciation for what is missing or neglected in our region. Also the Action Plan can become a "bank of ideas and local partners", which documents our greatest resource - the skills, experience and potential of the individual members of our Local Partnership. " - Przemysław Ōldakowski, member of Green Bieszczady Local Partnership.

3.2.4. Democratic decision-making

Once members of a Local Partnership have signed an Agreement, adopted some principles and procedures and agreed upon a joint Action Plan, issues of decision-making start to become of critical importance. Failure to agree upon a decision-making process can break a Local Partnership. A common sense approach is to



establish a **General Assembly** of the Local Partnership, which brings together all member organizations, for taking decisions that will affect the future role and development of the Local Partnerships. An immediate question relates to the issue of whether decisions are to be made by consensus, majority voting or in some other way. There is no ideal or best way. What is important is that the organizations making up the Local Partnership agree explicitly how decisions are to be made and what decision-making authority is granted to a **Presidium** or **Council** acting on behalf of the Local Partnership.

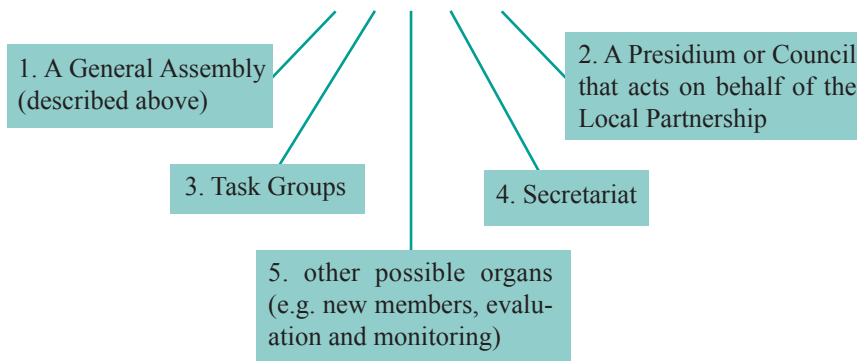
Summary: Having signed a Local Partnership Agreement, you will have adopted a set of operating principles and procedures for decision-making and also agreed upon an Action Plan. You have achieved:

1. the basis for building a Local Partnership, which will seek to engage other partners from the region with a commitment to sustainable development;
2. an organizational framework for information exchange, decision-making, coordinating various Local Partnership activities, including fundraising and promotion;
3. a list of priority activities for the Local Partnership, identifying challenges and opportunities for joint action.

3.3. Building organizational structures

3.3.1. Representation

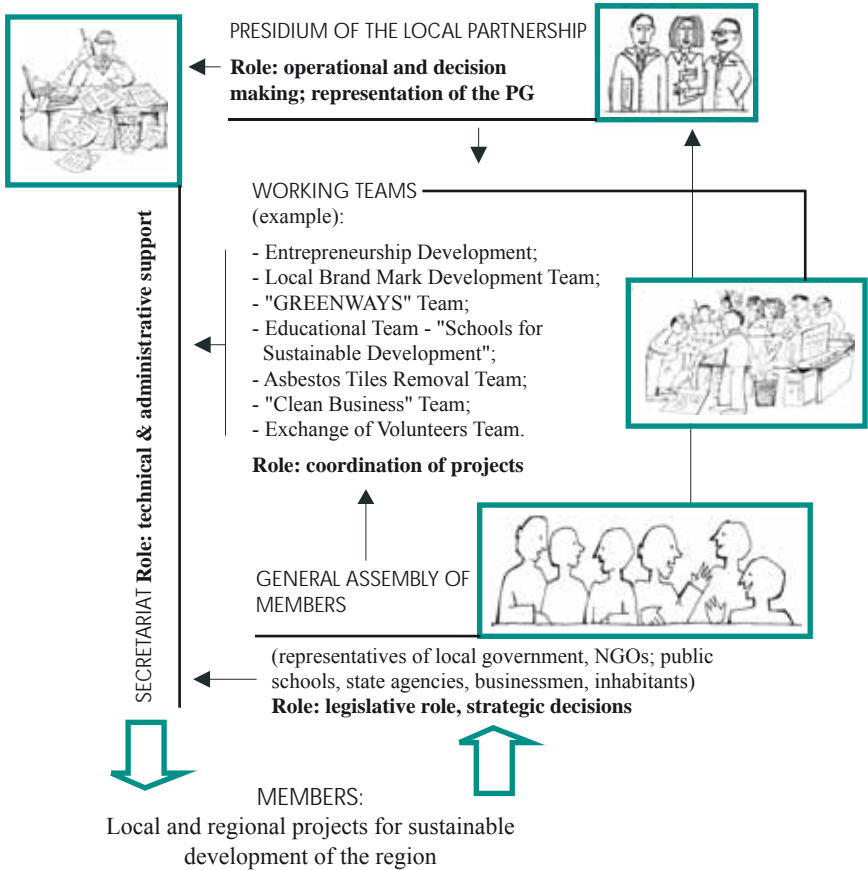
The organizational components of a Local Partnership are:



The day-to-day decisions that have to be made on behalf of the Local Partnership must be made by a representative body. This is the role of a **Council or Presidium of the Local Partnership**. As a representative body, the Presidium must be elected or otherwise endorsed by the General Assembly of the Local Partnership. As a rule of thumb, it is important to set a limited time period (usually 1 year) and determine the number of members (usually 3-4 persons) and the way they make decisions (majority voting or consensus?) and report to the General Assembly (at an annual meeting).

Presidium members are usually the most active and committed to making the Local Partnership a success. It is important to recognize that their contributions are voluntary, based on their personal motivation and enthusiasm. Nonetheless, the Presidium take on a responsibility to the membership of the Local Partnership as a whole and must be made accountable for their activities. To ensure that the Presidium is representative of the Local Partnership as a whole, it is a good idea to ensure that all three sectors - the business, civil society and public sector - are represented in the Presidium. The task of the Presidium is to make sure that Action Plan implementation remains consistent with the overall goals and aspirations of the Local Partnership.

To ensure effectiveness of day-to-day information and communications among Local Partnership members, a technical and administrative support system for the Presidium is needed. A Secretariat can be run either by an existing member organization or the Local Partnership can establish a new organization for this purpose, such as a regional foundation or association (see 4.2.3. for more details).



LOCAL PARTNERSHIP
organizational structure model

3.3.2. Task groups

Task Groups or Work Teams bring together partners interested in implementing projects dealing with specific themes, which have been recognized as being of importance to the Local Partnership as a whole. The topics may include big regional issues (e.g. business development, tourism, nature conservation etc.) or concentrate on small but significant local problems (e.g. asbestos roof tile removal). The Work Teams meet in response to needs and opportunities, and report on their activities to the Presidium.

'Necklace of the North' Local Partnership - Work Teams	'Babia Góra Bring Us Together' Local Partnership - Work Teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Necklace of the North Greenways - Schools for Sustainable Development - Youth - Entrepreneurship Development "Local Product Brand" - Loan-Guarantee - Clean Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Product - Sustainable Tourism - Renewable Energy - Schools for Sustainable Development
	Bochnia Local Partnership - Work Teams
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recreational Park "Usbornia" in Bochnia - Bochnia Land Greenways - Schools for Sustainable Development - Entrepreneurship

Summary: Establishing the organizational structure of the Local Partnership is linked to the decision-making processes essential for operations and development. To ensure long term success, the structure and decision-making processes must be open and transparent. This can be achieved by:

1. creating a range of projects and activities with diverse partners that will impact the development of the region;
2. developing cooperation ties with key regional partners, but also with national and international partners;
3. creating an effective communications and administrative support system for all Local Partnership members;
4. fostering initiative and recruiting active individuals wherever possible to help deal with specific themes of regional importance;
5. creating a system for regional fundraising/grant making aimed at supporting the activities of both individual Local Partnership members and the Local Partnership as a whole.

Organizational Issues for a Local Partnership

Stages	Key Questions	Techniques & Materials (suggestions)	Outcome / Effect on further development of Local Partnership	Who does what?	Comments / Tips
<p style="text-align: center;">Identify potential partners & local initiatives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who is a stakeholder? 2. Who are potential partners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey of local initiatives; - Consult plan or strategy prepared by Local Government; - Conference session focused on a given topic and open to people active or interested in that area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One or several followup information /consultation meetings; - Introducing/adopting the language of partnerships (three sectors, sustainable development; partnership approach; partnership project etc.) - Inventory of stakeholders and partners; - Inventory of initiatives and projects. 	<p>Initiating organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organizes the inaugural meeting; - asks invited organizations to provide a list of potential themes they would like to address through the Local Partnership; - makes sure that the meeting's participants arrange the next meeting's agenda <p>Partnership Broker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - meets with initiating organization to go over basics of what is entailed in organizing a Local Partnership; - keeps an eye on who is participating actively and who is more reserved or reacting negatively; - makes a survey of local communities and local people who actively engage in community life; motivate them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - getting to know each other will definitely take more than one meetings, organize meetings in places where people feel comfortable (like a community center, hotel); - remember that a Local Partnership can start out small - focus on finding partners and initiatives from the various sectors, who are reliable enough to show up and participate in meetings. Not everyone has to be involved at the beginning; - do not organize meetings where the majority of participants come from just one sector (e.g. business). The other sectors are likely not to show up for the next meeting unless they see right from the start that every

Stages	Key Questions	Techniques & Materials (suggestions)	Outcome / Effect on further development of Local Partnership	Who does what?	Comments / Tips
Identifying common challenges and opportunities	1. What are the challenges and opportunities facing the community and region? 2. Do we share any common challenges or opportunities? 3. Are there any specific areas that we work on locally, but want to work together on regionally?	- SWOT analysis; - brainstorming; - mosaic and vision activity; - community vision to action forum.	- Learning to acknowledge one another's work in setting joint priorities; - Finding out how others are affected by and deal with common challenges/opportunities; - Learning what values people have in their vision for the future of community and region; - Generate ideas for initiatives and projects, which can provide a focus for Work Teams.	to participate in a Local Partnership initiative meetings. Initiating organization - thinks up of categories of problem areas to give the discussion a framework; - presents the Partnership idea to stakeholders/partners; - invites an external professional or establishes a group to conduct a community vision to action forum. Partnership broker - helps facilitate a community vision to action forum.	sector is needed to make the Local Partnership a success. - try to alternate between work in smaller groups and work in plenary - this is the most effective way to get people to think and talk; - a community vision to action forum usually takes 2 days (4 hrs evening, entire next day).
	1. Is there an already existing initiative/idea that has the potential to become a regional partnership initiative?	- Presentation of existing programs (preferably in other Local Partnerships) that apply the principle of synergy;	- A brief outline of potential projects or project ideas, together with a map of the region where these projects can be easily located;	Initiating organization - draws up an initial list of projects or project ideas that local organizations want to undertake; - tries to cluster them in	- take a visit to an established Local Partnership, to get a bit of field experience in how a regional program looks like

Stages	Key Questions	Techniques & Materials (suggestions)	Outcome / Effect on further development of Local Partnership	Who does what?	Comments / Tips
<p>Drawing up a Local Partnership Agreement</p>	<p>2. What are the benefits to be achieved through partnership action?</p> <p>3. How does a local organization define its role and place in a regional partnership initiative?</p>	<p>- A list of existing initiatives/activities grouped into certain categories;</p> <p>- An analysis of the tourism potential of the region;</p> <p>- A report on the internal and external market for local goods & products.</p>	<p>- Building support for joint activities that add up to make not just bigger projects, but programs, which function on both the local and regional level.</p>	<p>groups according to topic and interest, bringing together where possible those who have little history of working with one another.</p> <p>Partnership broker</p> <p>- shows examples of benefits, which can be generated through partnership action (e.g. greenways).</p>	<p>- keep note of all ideas that come up at the first meetings (make sure you find someone to take on the role of rapporteur).</p>
	<p>1. What common values and concerns have brought us together?</p> <p>2. What do we expect from the Local Partnership?</p>	<p>- Existing PG agreements as reference material.</p>	<p>- Identifies the Local Partnership as an opportunity for contributing to regional development;</p> <p>- Creates a means for others who identify with the mission of the Local Partnership to become members;</p> <p>- Specifies the geographical region covered by the Local Partnership.</p>	<p>Initiating organization</p> <p>- brings together a small group of community leaders and drafts an agreement, which is presented for discussion and endorsement by members of the potential Local Partnership.</p> <p>Partnership broker</p> <p>- offers advice on preparing the Partnership Agreement making available experience from other Local Partnerships.</p>	<p>- bring media attention to this event, present it as the culmination of the work of previous meetings, not merely as just a signing ceremony;</p> <p>- stress the voluntary and open character of the Local Partnership as an element of a long-term strategy for sustainable development. Many will point to the voluntary character as a weakness.</p>

Stages	Key Questions	Techniques & Materials (suggestions)	Outcome / Effect on further development of Local Partnership	Who does what?	Comments / Tips
Adopting principles and procedures	1. How and on what basis do we make decisions on behalf of the Local Partnership? 2. What kind of organizational framework is the most appropriate for our Local Partnership? How do we divide and assign responsibilities? 3. How can a voluntary organization inspire commitment in its members?	- Principles and procedures adopted by existing Local Partnerships as reference material.	- the principles and procedures adopted by the Local Partnership; - offers positions of leadership and responsibility to those who feel strongly about the Local Partnership and have shown the most initiative and commitment; - gives every member voice and a role in decision-making.	Initiating organization - drafts principles and procedures, working closely with the most active partners /stakeholders; Partnership broker - offers advice on good practice and individual approaches to adopting principles and procedures in other situations.	- prepare some guidelines, which define what makes a project a partnership project (you should introduce the idea to the Local Partnership, get some feedback, and prepare a set of principles or criteria to define what constitutes a Partnership Project).
	Formulating a common Action Plan	- Sample action plan; - Sample fundraising plan; - An informal survey of who has experience in grantwriting, fundraising, coordinating a regional program, writing financial reports, etc.	The common action plan: - provides a basic outline of activities; - helps prioritize local actions in terms of their regional significance; - determines the capacity of member organizations to do project work aimed making progress towards realizing a common vision; - gives a baseline for creating Working Teams and assigning responsibilities to coordinators.	Initiating organization - drafts the proposed action plan; - proposes criteria for partnership projects; Partnership broker - helps prepare an action plan; - offers suggestions on how the Local Partnership should monitor ongoing needs and progress so as to provide for constant improvement of the Action Plan.	- Think about the resourcing component of the Plan - try and prepare working out how to make better use of existing resources available through the Local Partnership and how to attract additional external resources.

Stages	Key Questions	Techniques & Materials (suggestions)	Outcome / Effect on further development of Local Partnership	Who does what?	Comments / Tips
Decision-making	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Who is a member of the Local Partnership and who is not? How is each sector represented in the work of the Local Partnership? 		<p>General Assembly meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allows the Local Partnership to shape its activities as a contributor to development of the region; - provides small organizations and businesses interested in contributing to the bigger picture, a chance to shape the future of the Local Partnership and ensure that its activities remain relevant to local needs and circumstances. 	<p>Initiating organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organizes the General Assembly meeting. <p>Partnership broker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - informs members of the Local Partnership about ongoing or new programs and opportunities to get involved. 	
Representation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Who will represent the Local Partnership to outside organizations? Who will manage the administrative and technical support of the Local Partnership? How will the flow of information look like between the Local Partnership? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - list of responsibilities for Secretariat/terms of reference; - list of responsibilities for Presidium/terms of reference; - practical diagram showing information flow between particular Local Partnership bodies and to its members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Partnership Presidium; - Local Partnership Secretariat; - other positions of responsibility are created. 	<p>Initiating organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - takes on a leadership position in one of the Local Partnership bodies, such as the secretariat. <p>Partnership broker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advises Local Partnership authorities on practical approaches to solving problems 	

Stages	Key Questions	Techniques & Materials (suggestions)	Outcome / Effect on further development of Local Partnership	Who does what?	Comments / Tips
Work Teams	organizational structures and its members? 1. Can we meet on a regular basis to discuss plan implementation of projects in a given area that interests us? 2. What are our expectations of this topic area in the context of regional development? 3. Who will coordinate Work Team activities?	- list basic goals and task for each Work Team	Local Partnership Work Teams - enable the Local Partnership to focus on specific problem areas; - provide a means for involving everyone in practical action that contributes to the bigger picture of regional development.	related to democratic practice and representation.	

4. Maintaining a Local Partnership

This section is devoted to issues related to making the organizational structure of the Local Partnership function effectively. Although each Local Partnership must respond by definition to local needs, circum-

stances and opportunities, much can be learned from the experience of others when it comes to institution-building. At the outset it is important to recognize that turning ideas into action requires an organizational structure that really works. The more effective the organizational structure, the more can be achieved.



4.1. Management

4.1.1. Constituencies

The Local Partnership General Assembly brings together a diverse array of people from different organizations who typically do not know each another and have done little together in the past. In the initial period during which the Local Partnership is established, it is important to remember that the quality and nature of relationships formed will shape the future role and character of the Partnership. Expectations are articulated with respect to other partners and to the Partnership undertaking as a whole. If the Local Partnership is to be relevant to development of the region as a whole, much effort needs to be expended on building and maintaining a strong constituency of support among a wide diversity of groups and interests. The most important opportunity for constituency building is an annual meeting or General Assembly, which brings all member and potential member organizations together for open discussion as to goals and objectives, and what has been achieved in meeting them.



Up close

How should the Local Partnership deal with inactive members?

The challenge of mobilizing inactive individuals and organizations is everywhere. Everyone has already a full agenda and has little time to spare for additional activities or commitments. Those in the voluntary sector are typically overcommitted and have difficulty in meeting their existing obligations. How can a Local Partnership work, if it is to base its activities on the limited volunteer resources of its member organizations?

There is no simple answer. But it is important to remember that an important test of the relevance and utility of a Local Partnership lies in its capability to ease the time/resource burden of individual organizations by promoting joint action. The more effective a Local Partnership becomes in adding value to the individual activities of member organizations through facilitating partnership action, the more active will be the membership as a whole. To encourage member organizations to use the Local Partnership to search actively for partnership opportunities, it is a good idea to require them to make a declaration and pay a membership fee towards such activities. Periodic reviews will provide member organizations with an opportunity to debate to what extent the Local Partnership is meeting their aspirations and for others to evaluate to what extent the particular organization has contributed to making the Partnership really work. At this time, membership can be reviewed and memberships of inactive members can be suspended. The motivation is to respond to those organizations, which are the most active and give them the greatest opportunity to shape the future of the Local Partnership. In many cases, Local Government and other public agencies will not be very active. But their involvement is essential to the success of the Local Partnership as a whole. In such situations, observer status can be granted to such organizations. Inadequate flow of information and ineffective communication between members of the Local Partnership contribute most significantly to lack of active involvement in joint activities. So it is essential to continue informing all member and interested organizations as to the activities of the Local Partnership, whether or not they come to meetings or declare an interest in being involved in some specific activity.

The General Assembly of the Local Partnership is a key constituency-building activity and should be recognized as such. The Assembly provides an opportunity for all those who have been involved to voice their opinion and to celebrate their achievements. The Assembly is also key to promoting the Local Partnership and to building links with important public agencies, such as regio-

nal authorities which may not be committed to using partnership approaches for policy and planning purposes. With this in mind, a General Assembly meeting should take care to:

- a. Celebrate Achievements** - take stock of the activities of the Local Partnership by hearing reports from the various representative bodies and individual members.
- b. Deal with Decision-Making Issues.** Elect new representatives to serve in the governance structures of the Local Partnership and deal with changes or modifications to the principles and procedures adopted.
- c. Plan for the future.** Discuss and adopt a work plan, ensuring that it is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Local Partnership.
- d. Review Membership.** Introduce new members, suspend inactive members and discuss affiliations and links with statutory public agencies and programs.

4.1.2. Leadership

Each Local Partnership must have its leaders. These are people actively involved in Work Teams, the Presidium or in individual member organizations. Their work is supported by the Secretariat, which must provide for information and communication exchange. To ensure people are not discouraged but encouraged to act, it is essential that one of the key tasks of the Local Partnership is to work on improving the decision-making, monitoring and reporting processes.

Presidium members have a special role to play and their leadership must focus on enabling others to play a more active role in improving the work, organization and impact of the Local Partnership as a whole. As each of the Presidium members represents also an individual organization, care must be taken to ensure that the interest or views of that organization do not come to dominate or distort the direction of the Local Partnership as a whole. This is no easy task. Information and communication cannot be just the responsibility of the Presidium members, but of every member organization of the Local Partnership.



Leadership is also about dealing with differing views and interests, which are inevitable in a Local Partnership that brings together diverse organizations. This can be achieved through using the Local Partnership as a forum for exchange of views or perspectives and refraining from making judgements as to whether a particular position or activity is 'right or wrong'.

The Presidium of the Nowa Huta Forum offers an example of how their leadership helped build up the Local Partnership as a forum for mobilizing collective action. Nowa Huta, which is the industrial part of Krakow, has a reputation for being unattractive and a place where little can be achieved. Many businesses, community groups and public agencies are involved in valuable initiatives and projects, but these are undertaken in isolation and have little media impact. To change this situation, the Presidium of the Forum focused on mobilizing member organizations to increase their individual impact by encouraging them to work collectively on the occasion of common public events such as Earth Day (April) and Mobility Week (September). The result was that each member organization could achieve a much greater impact than would otherwise have been possible and thanks to collective action of Forum organizations, the City of Cracow not only included Earth Day and Mobility Week events into the calendar of important municipal events but also opened a community development office jointly with the Forum to encourage more community and business initiatives in the area. The Presidium of the Forum succeeded in generating a whole new generation of leaders, who now work on running the Local Office and organizing public events. They also succeeded in building cooperation with the City authorities instead of threatening them or criticizing them for inaction. The Forum is now working with the City to develop a Local Agenda 21 program for Nowa Huta.

Up close

Presidium limitations - to what extent do the activities of local organizations translate into regional activities promoted by the Local Partnership?

Inevitably, organizations with a local mandate or scope of interest tend to make up the membership of a Local Partnership. They range from municipalities, culture and tourist centers to bike clubs, environmental grassroots NGOs and local businesses. Accommodating a diversity of local interests is often a strength when it comes to addressing issues of regional significance or indeed how national and international policies are impacting the local situation. As long as a Local Partnership continues to endorse the principle of openness and inclusiveness to local organizations, it will always be of interest to those operating at regional or national scales who must take account of the local voice in formulating policy and planning responses.

Just how local interests come to be translated into regional priorities and vice-versa depends to a large degree on the way the work of the Local Partnership is organized and on how committed member organizations are to make a difference at the regional scale. (See also **4.1.4**)

4.1.3. Organization

A Secretariat is essential for providing logistical and administrative support for the activities of the Local Partnership and for ensuring information and communication between member organizations. The secretariat must be dedicated to organizing the work of the whole Partnership, even if it is housed within an existing member organization. The secretariat is the point-of-contact for all member organizations and all prospective members. For this reason, the secretariat must be staffed with people who are highly communicative and well organized. The challenges facing the secretariat should not be underestimated. The task is best taken on by a well-established community organization, which can draw on enthusiastic volunteers.



Up close

Secretariat limitations - to what extent do the activities of local organizations translate into regional activities promoted by the Local Partnership?

From the point of view of the Secretariat, the area covered by the Local Partnership has logistical implications. For a Local Partnership involving many partners and stakeholders scattered across a large geographical area the need is to rely on internet and telephone technology. Yet it is important to realize that nothing can substitute for face-to-face contact and not all organizations and individuals will have access to e-mail - especially in rural areas. The capability to facilitate information exchange and communication of the secretariat is directly related to the capability of the Local Partnership to help nurture regional perspectives among member organizations.

The question of who operates and resources the work of the secretariat must be dealt with explicitly by the General Assembly. If there is a lack of funds and resources for organizing a secretariat, it is not reasonable to expect that the Local Partnership will develop quickly. If there is no organization willing to take on the secretariat task, then some sort of interim arrangement needs to be established. The secretariat needs to be established in such a way that it serves the development of the Local Partnership as envisaged by its members - and not the other way around.

Establishing the secretariat must focus on the Local Partnership members articulating a list of responsibilities and also a list of declarations of assistance. Most of the expectations will center on information and communication activities, so access to an office with computers and telecommunications is essential.



Some Local Partnership secretariats have developed innovative solutions for information sharing and record keeping. For example, the Kamienna Góra Local Partnership uses the secretariat to collect project ideas and record them in "project bank" which is made available to all member organizations. Local Partnership members submit project ideas on a simple form, and the Secretariat draws attention to these projects at meetings which do not always involve everyone.

A communicative and well-organized person is essential for running the Secretariat. Without such a person, little will be achieved. One of the ways of working towards an effective secretariat is to treat the challenge as a partnership undertaking. For companies or public agencies, it is easier to contribute equipment or office space than funds. For voluntary groups, human resources can be made available for operating the secretariat. Various solutions are possible. There is no single best or ideal way, but experience suggests that interim arrangements need to make way for a dedicated office, and possibly a dedicated organization and legal entity if the Local Partnership starts to play a role in managing financial resources.

When deciding on how to organize the Secretariat, consider either:

1. strengthening the institutional and technical capacity of an existing organization, or
2. establishing a separate organization with its own legal identity, which can serve also to bring together several Local Partnership members See also 4.2.3.

Local Partnerships in Poland have found that a well-functioning secretariat requires up to 3 part-time staff. Most of the Local Partnerships operating in Poland make do with 2 persons dedicated to Secretariat affairs with support from volunteers for maintaining the website or helping to edit a newsletter.

The box below will give you an idea of what it means to run the Secretariat of a Local Partnership.

Activities proposed for the Secretariat of the Gorlice Local Partnership	Activities proposed for the Secretariat of the Wadowice Local Partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organization of Local Partnership Presidium meetings; - Administrative and technical assistance for Local Partnership Work Teams; - Preparation and maintenance of documentation for Local Partnership Work Teams, Presidium and General Assembly meetings; - Keeping minutes of meetings and distributing them to relevant Local Partnership organizations; - Providing general information about the Local Partnership to external interested parties; - Identifying opportunities for support of SMEs in Gorlice county; - Assistance to member organizations of the Local Partnership in writing grant applications; - Developing technical assistance programs in response to needs articulated by member organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribution of materials for use by Local Partnership Work Teams; - Organizing meetings of Work Teams and other types of meetings of the Local Partnership; - Monitoring and recording activities of the Local Partnership; - Promoting externally the work of the Local Partnership; - Conducting research on the possibilities of resourcing projects and initiatives developed under the auspices of the Local Partnership; - recruiting new members to the Local Partnership. <p style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"><i>(source: "Organization of the Secretariat of the Wadowice Local Partnership - proposed activities" and the "Secretariat of the Gorlice Local Partnership - Gorlice Center for Entrepreneurship Support)</i></p>

4.1.4. Action

Each Local Partnership is a multi-task initiative, which seeks to link together many diverse activities of individual member organizations with the purpose of adding value and impetus to them so as to maximize impact at the regional level. Work Teams are crucial organizational structures, which contribute to overall success of the Local Partnership. It is at the level of the Work Team, which brings together a community of interest of several organizations, that practical action is mobilized.

Even though an Action Plan concerning a particular topic or activity can be agreed, there are always the day-to-day practical realities of implementation. Work Teams provide a way of identifying and dealing with day-to-day

operational problems, which often have little bearing on the overall direction or strategy adopted. In the case of the the Green Bicycle East Carpathian Greenway Work Team for example, it was important to identify and document all the different types of accommodation along the proposed Greenway. The Work Team had to use its own networks and ingenuity to put together an



Experience with Local Partnerships to date, shows that manipulative or high-handed behaviour on the part of one organization will be shortlived as the voluntary nature of the coalition places a premium on long term commitment based on cooperation seeking to generate public benefit.

Translating an agreed common vision into joint action is a process that seeks to encourage individual organizations to move from operating individual isolated projects to undertaking more integrated partnership efforts. To develop and promote joint action through the Local Partnership, it is essential to analyze individual activities or projects in relation to their potential for integration with other projects and possible contribution to regional development. It is also important to identify individuals and organizations interested in using the partnership approach to translating individual projects and initiatives into more integrated regional projects.

<p>The Local Heritage Product Work Team of the Babia Góra Brings Us Together Local Partnership was established following the first General Assembly. When issues of regional importance were identified and organizations were asked as to their possible contributions, one of the key challenges related to creating a stable market for traditional arts and handicrafts products. The Work Team was established as a result, bringing together individuals and organizations from business, public agencies</p>	<p>The Green Bicycle Carpathian Greenway Work Team was established at the first meeting of the Green Bieszczady Local Partnership. The Greenway concept attracted lots of new ideas and many of those participating sought to fit their own activities into the framework of the Green Bicycle. While the Local Partnership Agreement was signed by 35 organizations, all expressing an interest in turning the Green Bicycle into a regional initiative, decisions as to the organizational structure of the</p>
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and voluntary groups sharing a common interest.

Partnership were put off to a later date with participants decided to focus their energy on developing a regional program. In a sense, the feasibility and potential of the Local Partnership was put to the test through the Green Bicycle project.

A Work Team must be task-oriented and so also needs organization and leadership. The best way of achieving this is to appoint a chair or coordinator, who will help organize and discipline the Work Team.

Q: What have your experiences been like as chair of the Local Heritage Product Work Team?

A: "I took on the responsibility of coordinating the activities of the Work Team because I myself am an artist who has struggled to promote local traditional art and bring it to a wider audience. I know what the needs are and I also know what local artists and artisans have to put up with. I am one of them. There is no detailed meeting schedule for our Work Team. We tend to organize frequent *ad hoc* meetings in response to specific issues or challenges raised by several group members. This approach helps us to be relevant to the needs of Team members and has helped us to get to know each other better. We always invite everyone to attend, even if they cannot come. This means everyone feels involved. Our approach has enabled us to move forward on a number of initiatives prioritized by the Local Partnership, such as the network of Babia Góra shops selling local heritage products and establishment of a local brand for heritage products. For me, the greatest challenge so far has focused on the challenge of expanding the Local Heritage Product scheme to include Slovak partners. We have succeeded in encouraging our Slovak counterparts to establish their own Local Heritage Product Work Team." Stanisław Szeliga, chair of the Local Heritage Product Team of the Babia Góra Brings Us Together Local Partnership.

During meetings of the Local Partnership, it is important to showcase the different projects/activities of the various Work Teams. This is essential for encouraging information exchange and communication within the Local Partnership and also for generating new energy, enthusiasm and organizations interested in getting involved. To be effective, each Work Team must be clear as to:

- a. representation (what is the geographical and thematic scope of interest?);
- b. results (what results have been achieved? what is to be achieved next?);
- c. organization (who is involved? who is responsible for what?)

The Local Heritage Product Work Team gained real momentum when it adopted a plan focusing on linking local activities to taking joint advantage of regional opportunities. One of the first opportunities was to come together to take advantage of participation in a Local Heritage Product Fair in Thuringen, Germany. This challenged individual local initiatives to develop a common regional image. The time spent together in planning, traveling and exhibiting in Thuringen made people realize how much more could be achieved through joint action. Instead of having separate stands, Work Team members/local producers presented their products together under the "Babia Góra Region".

A map helped identify each of the local products and initiatives, but in the context of the Babia Góra region as whole. Local producers saw in this approach an opportunity worth investing the time and effort in. The interest and enthusiasm generated had little to do with the opportunity to sell more products, but everything to do with recognition of the importance of heritage and the role of local communities in protecting this.

From an organizational point of view, the Thuringen experience helped individuals and organizations realize that they could count on one another for help in dealing with queries and issues related to local heritage products, including tax, marketing and other legal issues.

The Work Team has helped shape the development of the Green Bicycle East Carpathian Greenway program. A key decision was to involve as partners all 11 municipalities along the proposed trail and to ask them to cofinance route-planning. A project coordinator, Krzysztof Plamowski was appointed and succeeded in engaging all the municipal governments in the scheme. The technical route-planning provided a basis for attracting external funds for signage and trail development from the Ministry of Economy.

By communicating the successes of the Green Bicycle program to the wider constituency of the Local Partnership, the activities of the Work Team have helped inspire other Work Teams and other initiatives. They have also helped convince local governments that it is worth being active part of the Local Partnership.

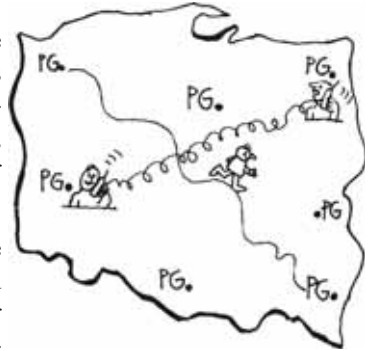
4.1.5. Working with others

A Local Partnership must be constantly on the lookout for new partners and supporters for its activities from outside organizations and institutions, whether they be local, regional, national or international. Each new partner brings new potential for partnership action.

One way of enhancing or adding value to the work of a Local Partnership is to build contacts and cooperation with other partnership initiatives in Poland and internationally.

As of August 2004, there were 13 Local Partnerships operating in different parts of Poland. Each has gained valuable experience in organizing its activities and implementing action plans. The network of Local Partnerships is now an important resource for the development of new partnership initiatives and for dealing with issues of maintenance of established partnerships.

The Local Partnerships participating in the Polish network have teamed up on numerous occasions to promote information exchange and learning. Joint study tours, conferences and promotional events have all been organized on various occasions. Several Local Partnerships have also initiated cooperation through thematic programs, such as the Greenways, Ecomuseums or Schools for Sustainable Development.



Summary: Local Partnerships must develop organizational structures to carry forward their activities. Whereas each Local Partnership must develop management arrangements that suit its specific needs, circumstances and opportunities, there are some generic organizational arrangements that facilitate institutional development. These include a General Assembly, Presidium, Secretariat, and Work Teams. The effectiveness of organizational structures depend on both the expectations and the contributions of member organizations. Costs, risks and workload must be shared, if benefits for all and the wider community are to be achieved.

4.2. Financing and capacity-building



Each Local Partnership must raise funds to cover the costs of its own operations and to enable implementation of the work plan. In terms of operational costs, these are mostly focused on administrative and logistical support for its governance structures: the Work Teams, Presidium and Secretariat. The success of any Local Partnership will depend on the development of a financial capability, even if the principle goal or objective of the Local Partnership is not focused on a financing role.

4.2.1. Determining needs

The Secretariat of a Local Partnership inevitably gets to identify and document the organizational or capacity needs of individual member organizations and the Local Partnership as a whole. Important ways of identifying and responding to needs is through:

- Designing and implementing small-scale projects initiated through Work Team activities;
- Designing initiatives, projects and programs of regional importance through consultation with Local Partnership member organizations;
- Providing administrative and technical support for information exchange and communication;
- Develop joint applications for funding and involve several different Local Partnership member organizations;
- Promoting the Local Partnership through the joint activities of its member organizations;
- Providing skills collective training for member organizations in response to requests for assistance (e.g. workshops, training sessions etc.)



4.2.2. Costing an action plan

The Action Plan brings people and organizations together around a cause. But any Action Plan must also be costed in terms of who does what and when and who covers the costs. The costing of an Action Plan is very much part of the partnership process as it is essential that all those endorsing or agreeing on the Action Plan help also to resource and implement it whether it be through direct financial support, donated time or types of in-kind support. To what degree costs, risks and workload of the Action Plan are shared depends very much on

the degree to which the member organizations of the Local Partnerships are used to working with one another.

Up close

What are the characteristics of a partnership project?

A partnership project in a very literal sense refers to any project that the Local Partnership endorses, supports or otherwise identifies with. Since partnership projects help define the character of the Local Partnership, it is important that they involve several organizations sharing risks, costs and workload in process of achieving public benefits. (See also 3.2.2.).

There are at least five different types of partnership project. They are distinguished by the different ways in which they are resourced and the different ways they facilitate cooperation between the organizations involved in their implementation. The key thing to note and think about here is WHEN cooperation starts (and ends) and WHAT qualities you need to have to implement these kinds of projects.

Five types of partnership project:

Type 1: One member of the Local Partnership individually applies for funding for a broad initiative. The organization subsequently invites other partners to participate in the implementation phase of the initiative. There is no common planning involved. The kind of cooperation taking place here is of lesser importance, and takes place only if there happens to be a partner interested in carrying out a given activity, for which another partner has already found funds.

Type 2: Individual members of the Local Partnership apply for funding for their own initiatives, and carry them out independently of one another. They use the Local Partnership to coordinate their implementation activities and so achieve better results and greater overall impact.

Type 3: Members of the Local Partnership apply for funds for individual initiatives, but later on combine them into a joint initiative, which they implement together. In this case, the Local Partnership is forming its own identity and building mutual trust.

Type 4: Every member of the Local Partnership applies individually for a common project. In other words, each member organization applies for funds to realize a particular portion of the larger joint project.

Type 5: Several members of the Local Partnership together apply for funding together. In other words, there is a single proposal and a single implementation plan that is agreed beforehand.

(Source: Tenders, 2003)

The Presidium of the Local Partnership must take responsibility for developing the costing arrangements for the Action Plan and ensuring that the formula developed has support across the whole Partnership.

4.2.3. Establishing a legal entity

If one of the central roles of the Local Partnership is to mobilize funds for implementing joint action among its members, then sooner or later a legal entity will need to be established. Only in this way, will appropriate audit trails be assured along with the necessary capacity for financial management, reporting and accounting. A legal entity may not be necessary, if the purpose of the Local Partnership is not a financial one, but more focused on coordination, learning or promotion or if there is already a strong member organization that can provide financial services to the Local Partnership as a whole.



Establishing a distinct legal entity helps identify the Local Partnership as a distinct organization and clearly locates the Secretariat and its responsibilities. Establishing the secretariat as a new legal entity also provides the capability and transparency that is needed for mobilizing funding.

The primary motivation for setting up a not-for-profit foundation or association is to increase the organizational capability of the Local Partnerships to realize goals and objectives. The new legal entity, whether a foundation or association can be customized to the specific needs and circumstances of the organizations making up the Local Partnership. In a not-for-profit foundation, individuals and organizations can be founders. Whereas an association permits only individuals to be members. Organizations, businesses or other legal entities can only be supporting members. Each of the two legal forms has its advantages and disadvantages. If the Local Partnership favours playing a role in financial management and transfers, then a foundation is the more appropriate option. If the Local Partnership is more focused on coalition-building, leaving its members to undertake financial operations then an association is more appropriate.

Three Local Partnerships in Poland have now set up their own not-for-profit foundations: Green Bieszczady, Bochnia and the Necklace of the North. In each case, the basic motivation was to improve the organizational and financial capability of the secretariat.

Responsibilities of the 'Green Bieszczady' Local Partnership Foundation	Responsibilities of the 'Necklace of the North' Local Partnership Foundation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinates the work of the Local Partnership and helps prepare funding applications; 2. Monitors and inventories local initiatives in all Bieszczady municipalities; 3. Raises funds for Local Partnership activities, including running Secretariat; 4. Organizes meetings of the Local Partnership and volunteers ; 5. Maintains a membership database; Monitors information flow among non-governmental organizations, as well as businesses and public sector organizations; 6. Prepares and conducts training sessions for Local Partnership members and local communities; 7. Maintains the internet portal of the Local Partnership ; 8. Builds international cooperations, with special attention given to contacts with Slovakia and Ukraine; 9. Supports Local Partnership members in organizing new initiatives; 10. Works together with local government on every level and with other institutions; 11. Maintains contacts with representatives of other Local Partnerships; 12. Provides accounting and legal help to Local Partnership member organizations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raises funds for implementing activities of the Necklace of the North Local Partnership; 2. Operates the secretariat of the Local Partnership, which has responsibility for correspondence, information exchange, phone and e-mail service, Internet web page updating; 3. Maintains records of the financial, membership, organizational and programming history of the Local Partnership; 4. Coordinates program activities of the Local Partnership; 5. Organizes meetings of the Secretariat Board, Presidium, and the General Assembly of the Local Partnership; 6. Creates and updates the database with contact information of Local Partnership members; 7. Maintains a centralized information system; 8. Organizes financial and technical support for organizations and programs developed and implemented through the Local Partnership; 9. Provides support for Local Partnership member organizations in applying for funds for project implementation; 10. Creates informational/educational materials relevant to Local Partnership activities.

From the perspective of Local Partnership development, the important thing about setting up a legal entity is that it provides an opportunity to improve the

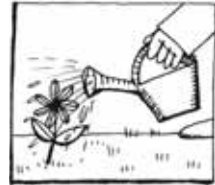
financial and organizational capability of the secretariat. But registering a legal entity does not absolve members of the Local Partnership from resourcing not just the secretariat, but the activities of the Local Partnership as a whole.

4.2.4. Resourcing

The effectiveness and impact of a Local Partnership is directly related to the degree of cooperation among its members. This means that the organizational and financing structure of the Local Partnership must be first and foremost focused on fostering cooperation between individual member organizations.

4.2.4.a. Small scale community-based initiatives

It is notoriously difficult to raise funds and other types of resources for cooperation or partnership action, unless this is related to some specific activity which generates public benefit. For this reason, it is useful to build the financial capacity of the Local Partnership through small projects, which bring tangible public benefits and which demonstrate the benefits of partnership action.

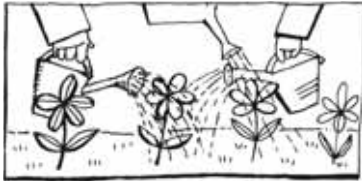


Work Teams are ideal for developing and implementing such small-scale projects, which can often receive small grant support from philanthropic foundations and development assistances programs.

Thanks to the Necklace of the North Local Partnership, the Lipka Krajeńska County Forest Service and the Lipka Krajeńska Municipality Office have teamed up on several projects aimed at revitalizing the local community. Both organizations are members of the Necklace of the North Local Partnership. They started off with a project that involved clean up and restoring an historical park and turning it into a recreation area for local people. The practical action project brought immediate results and so generated additional support from both heritage conservationists and the local community. The project demonstrated also that much could be achieved through joint action. The historic park restoration project inspired others to undertake their own practical action projects and the Necklace of the North Local Partnership made available relevant know-how and helped local leaders set up their own not-for-profit organizations. This is how the "Tilia" Center for Local Initiatives Association was set up.

4.2.4.b. Regional projects

Whereas small projects are of critical importance in that they bring tangible results and show how partnership action works in practice, they are typically insufficient when it comes to addressing the challenges of regional develop-



ment. One of the initial motivations of a Local Partnership is to have an impact on regional development. With this in mind, every Local Partnership needs to develop a portfolio of regional projects, initiatives and activities. For local organizations, the main advantage or benefit of participating in a Local Partnership is the opportunity to become involved in regional projects, which go beyond the local scale.

Regional projects are as much about influencing public sector expenditures as they are about mobilizing resources for Local Partnership activities. For example, public sector spending on tourism infrastructure is often limited and not well targeted to meeting local needs and circumstances. The role of the Local Partnership is to work with public agencies to help them spend funds more effectively by linking public expenditures to volunteer action and private sector financing. The challenge is not to transfer or replace public sector financing, but to add value to it by organizing additional financing and ensuring better results are achieved with the limited resources available.

The Bieszczady Cyclist Association applied successfully to the Ministry of Economy for funding to mark out the Green Bicycle Trail. The financing from national government was made possible due to the fact that local civic groups were able to persuade local governments that they could spend their limited funds more effectively by working together on a larger regional project. Local funds were not spent on infrastructure but on developing a technical plan for the Green Bicycle route. The joint effort led directly to drawing down additional funding from the national government and mobilizing in-kind contributions from local tourist operators and civic groups concerned with natural and cultural heritage protection. The success of the Green Bicycle routing project has provided the impetus for the East Carpathian Greenway, a much more ambitious project to encourage greater mobility for transport and recreation in the area.

4.2.4.c. Sharing technical and administrative support

As one of the tasks of a Secretariat focuses on the provision of technical support and advisory services to members, it is important that the Local Partnership also levies a membership fee. This can be annual or quarterly. The important thing is for all Local partnership members to contribute directly to the operation and development of the Secretariat and its services. There are numerous opportunities for



Local Partnership members to donate their own expertise and know-how through the Secretariat to others.

4.2.4.d. Increasing skills and know-how

Organizational capacity building and related resourcing should focus not just on the secretariat and the governance structures of the Local Partnership, but also on the member organizations themselves. Training activities on fundraising, conflict resolution, negotiation, legal and financial issues should be made available to all Local Partnership member organizations. By assessing training needs and responding to them, the Local Partnership can demonstrate its value to individual member organizations for whom many types of training and advisory services are not available. The opportunity is for individual member organizations to have a real influence on the type of training and advisory services that are developed.



4.2.5. Building Local Partnerships through regranting

As a regional coalition concerned with development, a Local Partnership has the opportunity to apply for funding for local as well as for region-wide projects/programs. With their membership of local organizations, Local Partnerships are often very much in touch with local needs, circumstances and opportunities. Lack of financing for starting up local initiatives is often an important issue. A Local Partnership can respond to this situation by developing its own capacity for providing financing to start-up initiatives or for other types of activities. One effective way of building up this role is to develop regranting schemes. In essence, these are schemes by which the Local Partnership secures a financial grant, which then is redistributed or transferred to members of the Local Partnership through open competition. Regranting schemes can be focused on providing funds directly to support important or promising new initiatives or they can be used to provide advisory services, such as legal or financial advice, which are not available to many small businesses or civic groups.



The "Green Action" Ecological Foundation is a member of the Middle Odra River Valley Local Partnership and operates the Secretariat. The foundation has developed the profile and capacity of the Local Partnership by using regranting schemes to give smaller civic groups to develop their own initiatives and programs aimed at engaging local communities in practical action.

The regranting schemes enabled the Local Partnership to support organizations, which would not have received financial support from anyone else as they were too inexperienced and lacked self-confidence. Financial support from the regranting scheme was backed up by technical and other types of hands-on advisory support. The result of the scheme is that several local civic groups are now actively working to engage business and local government sectors in practical action projects. For the Local Partnership more projects has meant more tangible impacts and so more support for the Local Partnership initiative.

Summary: The Local Partnership must work with and through its member organizations to develop its own character and development strategy. Promoting partnership action requires organization and financing. Local projects which bring tangible public benefits are crucial to demonstrating the effectiveness of the partnership approach, but regional projects are needed to build links with public agencies and to ensure impact on regional development.

Organizational capacity of a Local Partnership can be enhanced through the registration of a not-for-profit legal entity, which has the basic role of operating the secretariat. It is important to remember that building financial and organizational capacity must be the focus of all Local Partnership members, who must also contribute directly to the process.

Regranting schemes that support the development of new initiatives among Local Partnership members are an effective way of building up the capability for enabling practical action.

5. Assessing and monitoring effectiveness

Once a Local Partnership has been set in motion and member organizations are in one way or another involved in coordinating, managing or raising funds for partnership projects, it is time to assess progress. The obvious thing to do is to refer back to the initial version of the Local Partnership Action Plan and to discussions at the first General Assembly meeting. How far have we come since this first meeting? Is the Local Partnership having a real impact? Are all the founding organizations still involved? Has the Local Partnership become more than just a collection of interesting projects and initiatives? Have new partnerships been initiated and brought benefits to those concerned? These and other questions are worth posing as part of an effort to assess progress and performance of the Local Partnership. It is important to get member organizations to respond such questions.



Another approach is to review the reports and documentation accumulated by the Presidium, Secretariat and Work Groups in relation to the Action Plan formulated at the outset. What has succeeded and what has failed? Why? Have the goals and activities of the Local Partnership changed over time or have they stayed more or less the same?

A fundamental objective of the Local Partnership is to engage active participation from the public, private and civil society sectors. To what extent has this been achieved? How can engagement of each of the three sectors be improved. Has partnership action really made a difference?

Assessment is about asking questions. Such questions need to be asked constantly. It is important to foster a culture of asking assessment questions as this helps those involved keep on track.

5.1. Reporting progress

It is important that the Local Partnership generates periodic progress reports on activities, referring to organizational, administrative and financial issues, as well as thematic or program issues. Progress Reports should stress the overall progress of the Local Partnership in terms of impacts or contributions to regional development, rather than detail specific projects or activities. Progress reports should focus on:

- a. describing how partnership projects contribute to realization of the Local Partnership mission;

- b. the performance of the organizational and governance structures of the Local Partnership, especially in relation to development challenges;
- c. the financial performance of the Local Partnership with reference both to funding ongoing operations and funding for current and planned partnership projects;
- d. identifying and celebrating key successes or achievements of organizations, which have been actively involved in the work of the Local Partnership.

Progress Reports should be widely disseminated and provide a basis for discussion among Local Partnership members. They should also be used to hold the Presidium and Secretariat to account.

The Bochnia Local Partnership publishes an annual progress report which not only summarizes the activities of the previous year, but presents the challenges for the forthcoming year. The main topic of concern was a shortage of funds for ensuring effective administrative support for Local Partnership development. The Presidium proposed introducing a membership fee and applying for grant-aid for institutional development. The result prompted several member organizations to join together and apply for an institutional grant to the US Embassy Democracy Commission Small Grants Program.

When reporting progress, facts and figures are important. They should be included wherever possible. But it is important not to forget the feelings or impressions of individuals and organizations, who have devoted their time to making the Local Partnership effective. These qualitative assessments are as important as the facts and figures. This is because such impressions convey what the Local Partnership means to its members.

Up close

To what extent can member organizations reconcile their participation in the Local Partnership with their obligations to their own organizations?

The thing that lies behind this question can usually be brought down to one or more of the following issues:

- degree of commitment;
- attitudes of employers as to allowing their staff to get involved in Local Partnership activities;
- matching 'supply and demand' (the supply being the person and Local Partnership needs the demand);
- financial needs and priorities;
- self-interest vs community interest.

Each Local Partnership member organization will sooner or later face the problem of reconciling the interests of their own organization with the broader interests of the Local Partnership. It is important to recognize that conflicts of interests will arise. They must be dealt with openly and declared by the organization concerned. This will alleviate unnecessary confusion and misunderstandings on the part of other Local Partnership member organizations.

5.2. Sustainability indicators

Whereas the Local Partnership Action Plan and Progress Reports are documents of crucial importance to measuring performance, it is also important to refer to parameters or indicators of sustainable development.

Sustainability indicators in the most general sense are indicators, which measure the performance of specific aspects of the economy, community and environment of a given region. Indicators provide a basis for assessing the overall health of the region. Indicators are useful for influencing regional planning and policymaking and help show how environmental, economic and social issues are interconnected.

The Local Partnership as an organization by definition working toward sustainable development can play an important role in catalyzing and supporting a sustainability indicator program in the region as a whole. The Local Partnership can ensure that a wide range of stakeholders and the public more generally can become involved in formulating, assessing and reporting on sustainability indicators. Sustainability indicators can also provide additional measures of the performance of the Local Partnership.

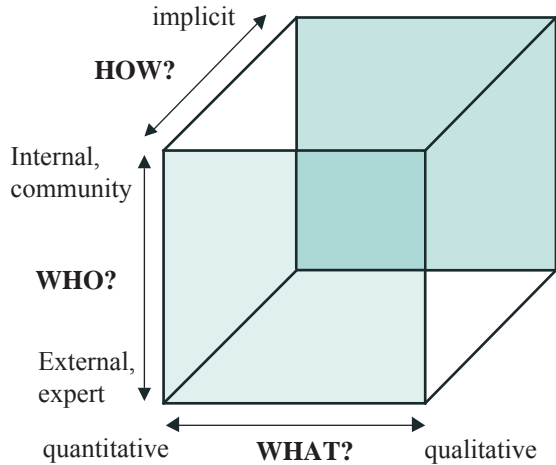
Indicators are not necessarily the best method of monitoring how well the Partnership Group meets its overall goals, but they are a starting point for examining and measuring the effects of cross-sector cooperation in a more transparent and clear way.

Sustainability indicators developed for the Nowa Huta district of Cracow by the Forum for Nowa Huta				
Economic indicators	Number of start-ups and bankruptcies in Nowa Huta per year	Percentage of city budget designated toward development of Nowa Huta	Average waiting time for an official decision	Unemployment rate in Nowa Huta

Community indicators	Amount of public works conducted by the unemployed in Nowa Huta	Number of free after-school activities run by teachers	Book lending rate per capita	Percentage of people participating in the District Council elections
Environmental indicators	Percentage of green areas in Nowa Huta	Energy consumption (gas, electricity, heat) per capita	Accessibility of waste segregation points (number of disposal places, containers, etc.)	Legal compliance regarding air, water and soil standards

(These indicators are part of a sustainability indicator set developed during two community workshop sessions in 2002. The Forum for Nowa Huta has coordinated data collection and collection in relation to the indicators and succeeded in using them as a basis for initiating development of Local Agenda 21.)

The process of developing sustainability indicators is not an easy task, especially when we are deliberating on the who? what? how? of the issue. The figure below shows the spectrum of issues to think about.



Note: the "What?" refers to the type of indicator measured; the "Who?" refers to the degree of public participation in the overall sustainability indicator process; the "How?" refers to the method for measuring the indicator.

(Source: Bell & Morse, 2003)

5.3. Informing practical action

The Local Partnership must constantly work on integrating practical action initiatives and projects of member organizations and translating them into regional programming. One approach to strengthening this process is to use community vision to action fora. The goal and motivation is to get people to think beyond their own individual interests and those of their organizations. It is useful to organize community visioning or other types of workshop as ways of accentuating the collective interest of the Local Partnership and helping to motivate and inspire people to find new ways of working with one another.

Without providing a context, individual initiatives and projects can become little more than an eclectic collection of activities with little impact on regional development. Community visioning workshops help provide that context and are especially useful where:

- a. member organizations measure the success or failure of their involvement in the Local Partnership in terms of impacts on regional development;
- b. processes and transformations occurring on the local and regional level affect the activities of Local Partnership member organizations;
- c. Local Partnership member organizations are grasping for a common future vision in their own individual activities.

Summary: A Local Partnership must assess its performance in terms of advancing or implementing sustainable development. Monitoring and assessing progress at the level of contributions of individual organizations and the Local Partnership as a whole are important challenges that must be faced.

Regular reporting of progress in the form of both quantitative and qualitative measures is important. It is also worthwhile to develop a set of sustainability indicators and engage in community visioning exercises and other types of workshops that help provide a regional context or reference for activities of individual organizations.

6. Role of the partnership broker

Experience with establishing and maintaining Local Partnerships underscores the need for someone committed to the partnership process to be working constantly on the partnership building process. This partnership broker may be an individual or an organization. The partnership brokering function can be internal to the Local Partnership. In other words, the function is taken on by an individual or organization actively involved as a member of the Local Partnership. In some situations, the partnership broker can be external to the Local Partnership. In other words, a third party specifically charged with playing the partnership broker role.



6.1. What is a partnership broker?

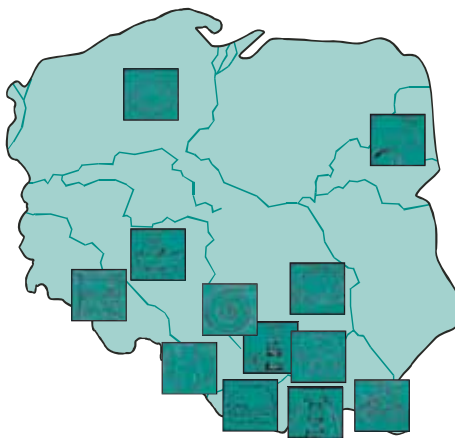
The activities of a Local Partnership depend on facilitating cooperation among organizations from three sectors: public, private and civil society. The motivation is to constantly search for opportunities for synergy that will generate additional benefits to participating organizations and to the community or region as a whole. The partnership broker helps member organizations in this process. The role requires skills related to facilitation, moderation, conflict resolution and holistic thinking. More specifically, the tasks of the partnership broker are to:

- act as an intermediary to build cooperation between the partners;
- help the Local Partnership build its own capability for organizing and implementing partnership action;
- encourage organizations to build their own capacity for using the partnership approach;
- monitor development of the Local Partnership as whole, drawing attention to organizational, governance and financial issues;
- articulate the operational principles of openness, transparency and public benefit, as well as the overall vision of the Local Partnership.

If we consider the various stages of development of a Local Partnership (see chapters 3 and 4), it is apparent that the role of the partnership broker will be shaped by the level and quality of interaction and cooperation between members of the Local Partnership. The Local Partnership should aim to develop an internal capacity for the partnership broker function and so should include this objective in Action Plans, programming and fundraising activities (see 4.2.5.).

6.2. Partnership brokering in practice

One example of an organization, which plays the role of the partnership broker is the Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation. The Environmental Partnership has been involved in one way or another in helping local leaders and organizations establish Local Partnerships. The 12 Local Partnerships that together form the basis of a national network have all benefited in some way from involvement and support of the Environmental Partnership.



The Environmental Partnership assists local organizations in the partnership-building process by:

1. offering expertise and advice on the partnership approach, drawing on the experience of Local Partnerships which are already operating;
2. participating actively in the Local Partnership formation process through facilitation, conflict resolution, training and legal and financial advice;
3. supporting the development of partnership projects and regional programming through technical assistance and financial support;
4. building networks of cooperation between existing Local Partnerships to build internal capacity for partnership-building.

6.3. Finding a partnership broker

Before appointing or contracting a partnership broker, it is important to be clear about roles and responsibilities. Tendencies for the Presidium or Secretariat to transfer their responsibilities for shaping the Local Partnership onto the partnership broker should always be resisted. The partnership broker must assist, advise and troubleshoot, but not decide on how to deal with the challenges faced by the Local Partnership.

A partnership broker may be an external trained consultant who provides specific services, such as facilitating certain portions of meetings (brainstorming sessions, community vision to action forums etc.), preparing workshop materials or helps draw up key documents of the Local Partnership (progress reports, action plan, fundraising plan etc.). But this does not have to be the case. In many cases, the partnership broker function is taken on by the Presidium or the Secretariat. It is worth remembering that the skills and

experience of the partnership broker are often available within the Local Partnership, but need to be sought out explicitly.

All partnership brokers have certain qualities in common, which reflect the fact that partnership brokering is above all an ability to work creatively with people who often have different interests, experiences, skills and motivations. Key qualities include:

- Trustworthiness and integrity,
- Willingness to take risks,
- Equanimity in the face of pressure,
- Personal modesty,
- Dedication to the principles of partnership.

(Source: Tennyson & Wilde, 2000)

Summary: A partnership broker is essential for the development of a Local Partnership as an organization, which meets the expectations of member organizations from business, government and civil society sectors. The partnership broker is there to get people and the organizations they represent to search for ways of working together, which will generate additional benefits for them and for development of the region as a whole.

The partnership broker can be an individual or organization internal to the Local Partnership or else be an outside third party - external to the Local Partnership. It is important to remember that many of the skills and experience relevant to the partnership brokering function are often available within the organizations making up the Local Partnership, but need to be sought out explicitly.

It is essential to constantly build capacity for partnership brokering within member organizations and for the Local Partnership as a whole. For this reason, a provision for partnership training and capacity building should be included in the Action Plan, programming, reporting and fundraising activities of the Local Partnership.

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Appendix 2. Useful contacts

ON PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

The Environmental Partnership Association
www.environmentalpartnership.org
The Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation
www.epce.org.pl
The Quebec-Labrador Foundation
www.qlf.org
Groundwork
www.groundwork.org.uk
FAOW
www.agro-info.org.pl/index
UNDP
www.undp.org.pl

ON PARTNERSHIP THEORY AND METHODOLOGY:

The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum
www.iblf.org
The Copenhagen Centre
www.copenhagencentre.org
Rural Portal
www.ww.org.pl

ON PARTNERSHIP PRACTICE:

Partnership Brokers Forum
www.partnershipbrokers.net
Know Your Watershed Campaign
www.ctic.purdue.edu/KYW/Brochures/BuildingLocal.html
Partnership Brokers Accreditation Scheme
www.thepartneringinitiative.org
Cambridge Post-graduate Diploma on "Cross-Sector Partnerships"
www.cpi.cam.ac.uk/pccp

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

UNDP
www.undp.org.pl
New Economics Foundation
www.neweconomics.org
Institute for Sustainable Development
www.ine-isd.org.pl

FUNDERS:

LEADER

EQUAL

Stefan Batory Foundation

www.batory.org.pl

Sendzimir Foundation

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'NECKLACE OF THE NORTH' LOCAL PARTNERSHIP

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'FLINT CIRCLE' LOCAL PARTNERSHIP

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